

Faculty of Health Sciences Aboriginal Speaker Series on Culture and Health

Event Organizer: Aleshia Denny
(any questions contact information adenny@uwo.ca)

First Presentation

Date: Wednesday March 3rd, 2010

Time: 7-9pm

Location: HSB 9 (main floor close to the Tim Hortons)

Speakers:

Bill Hill and Dan and Mary Lou Smoke

Dan and Mary Lou Smoke



Dan and Mary Lou Smoke are an exceptional couple, who for many years, have fostered and advanced racial harmony and the elimination of discrimination in our community. It has been through their individual and collective efforts of sharing knowledge of the First Nations faith, history and culture that they have greatly enhanced cross-cultural understanding, healed and improved the climate of race relations in London, and

provided new means of overcoming barriers and differences.

In recognizing as much, the City of London, Ontario named Dan and Mary Lou Smoke to the 2001 Mayor's New Year's Honours List in the "Humanitarian" category.

Dan and Mary Lou are positive role models and are held in high esteem within the Native and non-Native communities. Dan and Mary Lou often work together conducting opening and closing ceremonies at events as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, UN Human Rights Day, and National Aboriginal Day ceremonies.

Since 1991 Dan and Mary Lou Smoke have been the hosts of the First Nations radio program "Smoke Signals" (CHRW 94.9 FM Radio Western, University of Western Ontario), a radio newsmagazine program that bridges the gap of understanding between Native and non-Native world views. They are also commentators on the local London TV station, "A." The "A" Channel is owned by the CTV Bell Globe Media Family. They reach an audience of 8 million viewers in Southern Ontario.

Dan is a member of the Seneca Nation of the Iroquois Confederacy. Among his many credits, Dan is the president of the Board of Directors for the Native News Network of Canada, treasurer of the Native Journalist's Association of Canada. He has been an invited speaker at the AGM of the Canadian Association of Journalists in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 2005. Dan has been working with traditional knowledge carriers from many Nations which include: Cree, Lakota, Cayuga, Seneca, Oneida, Mohawk, and Onondaga Nations of the Haudenosaunee. He has also been working with the Ojibway Medicine Man Isaac Day to learn the pipe and the fasting ceremonies. Both he and Mary Lou help to conduct purification ceremonies for the people when requested, and have been holding New Year's Eve sweat lodge ceremonies for the past 17 years in the London area.

Mary Lou, a member of the Ojibway Nation, is a gifted writer, singer, guitarist and traditional drummer who willingly volunteers and shares her talents with the community at large. Mary Lou has performed internationally (Germany, Holland), nationally (1976 Olympics) and locally (Grand Theatre, London and Ontario Place, Toronto). She also performs at traditional pow wows and Aboriginal Music Festivals. She is the founding member of a local women's drumming group and has contributed to the healing and well being of Native and non-Native women and to a greater understanding between women of many faiths. The drum group is called the "Ogitchidaw Kwe Wag Singers."

"Through their extraordinary volunteer efforts, Dan and Mary Lou Smoke are an inspiration to those who believe in an inclusive community where new knowledge and understanding can lead to healing, harmony and peaceful co-existence."

Since 2006, the Smokes have taught a course at the University of Western Ontario for the First Nations Studies Department, cross-listed with the Faculty of Information and Media Studies, entitled, "The Representation of First Nations Issues in the News Media." It is a third year journalism/media course housed in the Media and Information

and Technoculture Department. In 2008, they were awarded the University Students Council of UWO's Teachers of Excellence Award for their teaching methods, which include ceremonial protocols. Last summer, they taught a course, entitled, "An Introduction to Indigenous Spirituality" at Brescia University College, an affiliate of the University of Western Ontario.

Bill Hill R.P.N., B.S.W., M.S.W, RSW, B. Ed

- Social Worker
- Aboriginal - Clinical Practice Advisor
- Homes for Special Care
- Regional Mental Health Care – London

Bill Hill has worked at Regional Mental Health Care London since 1982, originally as a nurse and now as a community-based social worker. He is also currently finishing a degree in Education at Brock University in the Native Teacher Education Program. Over the past ten years he has been a course instructor for Traditional Aboriginal Healing Methods. Bill has had the honour of speaking at different venues across Southwestern Ontario regarding Native mental health, Native education and it's inclusion with existing healthcare/education modalities.

Second Presentation

Date: Wednesday March 30, 2010

Time: 5-7pm

Location: HSB 236

Speakers:

Chantelle Richmond and Eli Baxter

Chantelle Richmond



Dr. Chantelle Richmond is Ojibway of the Pic River First Nation in Ontario. She completed her graduate degrees at McMaster University and McGill University, and she is currently Assistant Professor in Geography and First Nation Studies at The University of Western Ontario. Chantelle is a health geographer by training and her research seeks to understand how the physical and social environments can interact to influence the health and wellness of Indigenous Canadians. She draws from a broad range of methods and approaches that build on the local knowledges and capacities of Indigenous communities. Chantelle is particularly excited about engaging with First Nations communities in the Great Lakes region on projects that will promote health, engage youth and preserve local knowledge.